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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 26 November 1991, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/20 by which, inter alia, it called upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations to work in close coordination and cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in particular on follow-up to and review and evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. 1/

2. The General Assembly reaffirmed that the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s would necessitate the full participation of the international community, in particular of the Governments, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and emphasized the importance and the need to ensure follow-up to and monitoring and implementation of the New Agenda in accordance with General Assembly decisions.

3. By the same resolution, the General Assembly endorsed the agreement reached between the organizations of the United Nations system and OAU for convening a meeting between the secretariats of those organizations, to be held in 1992, in order to review and evaluate the final progress achieved in the implementation of the proposals and recommendations agreed upon in April 1990 and 1991, and requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to support the efforts of the Secretary-General of OAU, with a view to holding sectoral meetings in the priority areas of cooperation, particularly the establishment of the African Economic Community and the strengthening of the African regional and subregional organization.

4. The present report gives an account of the deliberations, conclusions and recommendations of the meeting held at Addis Ababa from 2 to 4 April 1992 between the secretariats of the United Nations system of organizations and of OAU, its specialized agencies and other organizations.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

5. On 1 November 1991, a delegation of the OAU secretariat, led by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Cooperation, held a consultative meeting with the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship in New York on cooperation between the United Nations system of organizations and OAU.

6. At the conclusion of the meeting, it was agreed that a mid-term meeting between the secretariats of the United Nations system and OAU should be convened to review implementation of the programme of cooperation between the secretariats of the two organizations since their meeting in April 1991; and to adopt new measures for the effective implementation of the 1992/93

programme of cooperation in the context of OAU efforts to establish the African Economic Community.

7. Subsequently, at the request of OAU it was agreed that the meeting should also exchange views on the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s to ensure that practical modalities for cooperation between the two secretariats are put in place for the implementation of the New Agenda.

8. It was agreed that the agenda for the meeting should be as follows:

(a) Review of cooperation between the secretariats of the United Nations system and OAU during the period from April 1991 to March 1992;

(b) Popularization of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community;

(c) Economic integration and cooperation;

(d) Refugees, returnees and displaced persons;

(e) United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

9. The list of participants in the meeting from the United Nations system and OAU, as well as other organizations follows:

A. United Nations

Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat
Department of Economic and Social Development of the Secretariat
United Nationsw Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
World Food Programme (WFP)
Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO)/ Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

B. Specialized agencies

International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
World Health Organization (WHO)
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)/World Bank
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

C. Organization of African Unity

General Secretariat
African Accounting Council (ACC)
African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI)
Pan-African News Agency (PANA)
Supreme Council of Sports for Africa (SCSA/CSSA)

D. Other organizations

African Development Bank (AfDB)

10. The meeting was officially opened by Mr. James O. C. Jonah, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who delivered the message of Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations. The meeting was also addressed by Ambassador Brownson Dede, Assistant Secretary-General of OAU for Economic Development and Cooperation, and by Mr. Issa Ben Yacine Diallo, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Acting Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Popularization of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community

11. The meeting recalled that the provisions of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community envisage, primarily, the strengthening of existing regional economic communities, particularly the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU). In this regard, participants were urged to support those organizations as they constituted the building blocks of the African Economic Community.

12. Regarding the sensitization campaign, OAU requested the United Nations system, particularly the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, to mount this campaign and to mobilize support for Africa's development partners and for the programmes and activities of the African Economic Community. The United Nations system was urged to promote and ensure sustained media support throughout the implementation stages of the African Economic Community.

13. After a thorough exchange of views on the subject, the participants stressed that Africa must strengthen its resolve and commitment to the objectives of the African Economic Community. They agreed on the following actions to be undertaken for the popularization of the Economic Community:

(a) Popularization of the Treaty must start at the national level;

(b) The links that exist between the popularization of the Treaty, its implementation and the role to be played by Africans must be emphasized;

(c) Implementation of the Treaty and its popularization must be included on the agenda of African leaders;

(d) Popularization of the objectives of the Economic Community must be debated in national parliaments and conferences;

(e) Committees for popularizing the Treaty must be established at national levels;

(f) The specialized agencies of the United Nations system must be urged to translate, print and disseminate the Treaty in African languages in order to reach the grass-roots levels of the population.

14. The meeting underscored the need for close cooperation between OAU and the United Nations system in carrying out the sensitization campaign. OAU was requested to submit to the United Nations agencies specific projects on its programmes for the popularization of the Treaty and its implementation. The United Nations agencies also requested that the subject be included on the agenda of the meetings, seminars and workshops which they organize in Africa. Examples of such meetings included those of the African Labour Commission and the forthcoming International Donors Conference on the African Child. The meeting agreed to the proposal of holding two meetings between the United Nations system and OAU in New York and Geneva to help sensitize the international community about the objectives of the African Economic Community.

B. Economic integration and cooperation

15. The meeting noted the primary role that regional economic communities play in the context of article 6 of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community. In this regard, it was stressed that the African Economic Community would enhance the strengthening and development of regional economic communities. The United Nations specialized agencies would continue to assist OAU in the preparation of the protocols of the Economic Community. Those already participating in the preparation of the protocols were urged to pursue their efforts in close cooperation with OAU. OAU stated it would submit specific requests to those who were not yet involved in the preparation of the relevant protocols.

16. It was agreed that the United Nations specialized agencies would provide information to OAU on the activities they carry out with the regional economic communities in Africa in their specific areas of competence. The United Nations agencies requested OAU to submit to them appropriate requests prior to the holding of meetings on the cooperation between the secretariats of the two organizations. The meeting agreed that the submissions of the United Nations

agencies on their respective areas of cooperation with OAU should be annexed to the report of the meeting.

17. It was proposed that meetings be organized in Geneva and New York to popularize the Treaty and to take stock of the cooperation between OAU and the United Nations prior to the regular meetings between organizations of the United Nations system and OAU.

C. Refugees, returnees and displaced persons

18. The meeting focused on a number of priority issues concerning refugees, returnees and displaced persons, including root causes; durable solutions; emergency preparedness and response; collaborative, integrated and coordinated approaches to humanitarian assistance; the humanitarian dimension of the New Agenda for Africa; and the follow-up to the International Conference on Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa (SARRED)

19. The meeting identified human rights abuses, conflicts and adverse socio-economic conditions as constituting the main root causes of the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons in AFrica. It noted the establishment within the OAU general secretariat of a division to deal specifically with conflict prevention, management and resolution. The meeting also noted the requests and appeal made by OAU with regard to resources and logistic support to enable it to cope with conflict situations. In this connection, OAU called upon relevant United Nations agencies to consider providing training facilities for OAU personnel in order to enhance their technical capability and capacity to handle conflict situations effectively, in particular, conflict prevention and management.

20. With regard to durable solutions, the meeting was of the view that voluntary repatriation was only feasible in an atmosphere of peace, security and stability. It noted that efforts by OAU and the United Nations had brought about positive results in that regard and should be encouraged and intensified. It also noted that there was need for burden sharing in mobilizing resources at all levels for the reintegration of returnees. Local integration was considered as the next most durable solution where voluntary repatriation was not feasible. It urged member States of OAU to facilitate local integration of those refugees who might opt to remain in their countries of asylum (naturalization, access to job opportunities, etc.).

21. The meeting considered the importance of emergency preparedness and response as tools necessary for prompt action in emergency situations. There was, however, a need for OAU and relevant United Nations bodies to establish an early warning system mechanism and for strengthening of coordination as well as for mobilizing adequate resources and ensuring their prompt and efficient delivery to the target groups. OAU and its member States must also ensure that corridors of tranquillity are created within conflict areas to enable humanitarian assistance to reach the affected population.

22. The meeting further noted that in order to provide effectively for the needs of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons, there must be a general coordinated and collaborative approach by the United Nations system, Governments and non-governmental organizations. It urged that the humanitarian dimension of the New Agenda should be given due attention in the implementation of the programme.

23. The meeting noted that the provisions of the Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action on SARRED (A/43/717 and Add.1, appendix) were still valid and should be pursued. In this connection, it called for the convening of the Steering Committee of SARRED to review developments in southern Africa, particularly the repatriation of South Africans, Angolans and Mozambicans to their respective countries and their subsequent rehabilitation.

24. Special mention was made of the Rwanda and Somali cases where OAU and the United Nations systems had worked closely. The meeting appealed to the United Nations system of organizations to provide increased resources to African countries in order to enable them to cope more effectively with the problem of refugees, returnees and displaced persons. In this regard, the meeting:

(a) Urged those OAU member States that have not yet ratified the African Charter on Human and People's Rights as well as the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees to do so, and to adhere strictly to their provisions as a basis for addressing the outflow and the problem of refugees in the continent;

(b) Called upon OAU and UNHCR to organize seminars and meetings to sensitize and educate the public on the root causes of asylum-seeking on the continent;

(c) Called upon the concerned member States of OAU to adopt the necessary legal measures within the countries of origin to enable the smooth and safe reintegration of returnees;

(d) Called upon OAU member States and relevant United Nations system organizations to integrate returnee programmes into their national development plans;

(e) Urged OAU, UNHCR and other organizations concerned to finalize as soon as possible the Plan of Action on Rwandese refugees. OAU was requested to pursue its efforts to ensure an early and effective cease-fire and promote the dialogue between the parties to the conflict in order to pave the way for humanitarian response to the crisis.

D. United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

25. In discussing the modalities of follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the meeting observed that action would be needed at both

institutional (namely, OAU and the United Nations system of organizations) and intergovernmental levels regarding the identification of specific activities to be carried out. It was emphasized that the OAU secretariat should be more involved in the follow-up, evaluation and monitoring of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda. In this connection, the meeting noted that the OAU Permanent Steering Committee, which would meet from 6 to 10 April 1992, and which had the United Nations New Agenda as one of the most important items on its agenda, should come up with arrangements for a machinery among African countries that would fit into the envisaged global machinery.

26. The attention of the meeting was drawn to the follow-up monitoring and evaluation machinery as contained in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and General Assembly resolution 46/20 on Cooperation between the United Nations and OAU which emphasize the importance of, and the need to ensure follow-up to, and monitoring and implementation of, the United Nations New Agenda. These documents also stipulate that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should work in close coordination and cooperation with the Secretary-General of OAU on follow-up to, and review and evaluation of, the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda; and request the United Nations Secretary-General to invite the representative of the Secretary-General of OAU to participate in the meetings of all the United Nations bodies/committees and its working groups on follow-up to and monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the New Agenda. The meeting noted that the provisions of these resolutions constituted the basis and rationale for the agenda item under discussion.

27. The United Nations Secretariat, particularly the Department of Economic and Social Development and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), provided important information regarding arrangements being made to follow-up, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda. The arrangements at United Nations Headquarters included the establishment of the Office of the Special Coordinator in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development whose functions embraced, inter alia, promotional activities, follow-up at national level, monitoring and mobilizing international support for the implementation of the New Agenda. They also included a proposal to establish a high-level consultative group of between 15 and 25 personalities to advise the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda.

28. On the proposed high-level consultative group, the meeting was informed that the membership would consist of personalities from various regions of the world, namely, AFrica, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and North America. It was observed that care must be taken not to have a consultative group which would be similar to intergovernmental machinery. It was also stressed that more consultations should take place on the issue, including in particular with OAU.

29. The meeting was informed that a United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force proposed under the 1992/93 budget would monitor the implementation of a system-wide plan of action for African economic recovery and development which

was in the process of being finalized, including programme 45 of the 1992-1997 medium-term plan of the United Nations. It was also informed that other inter-agency machineries were being contemplated. It was noted that since programme 45 was prepared before the adoption of the United Nations New Agenda, it was being updated to incorporate all elements of the latter. Also, in order to enable the United Nations system of organizations to take into account various aspects of their cooperation with OAU in the revision of the system-wide plan of action, OAU should provide the necessary information, bearing in mind existing activities and programmes directed to Africa at national, subregional and regional levels. Specifically, it was agreed that the system-wide plan of action should place particular emphasis on activities and programmes promoting economic cooperation and integration. It was also agreed that efforts should be made to come up with innovative activities and resources that are additional to existing ones. Most of the time, the tendency had been to report on ongoing activities, as was often the case during the implementation period of UNPAAERD.

30. In addition to the above planned arrangements in the United Nations Secretariat and at the inter-agency level, the meeting also discussed the issues of follow-up of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda at the national level. It was observed that, in addition to the role which the United Nations resident coordinator could play at the national level, United Nations agencies together with OAU local offices, where they exist, should be more involved and necessary consultations should take place to that effect.

31. The meeting discussed extensively the role of OAU, at various levels, in the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda. It was noted that General Assembly resolution 46/20 clearly spelled out the collaboration between the United Nations system and OAU, including the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the New Agenda, as contained in paragraph 46 of the New Agenda. While resolution 46/20 was comprehensive and provided an umbrella for cooperation, the meeting made specific proposals on involvement of OAU in the follow-up of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda. It was suggested that OAU should participate fully in all meetings of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force (see para. 29) and in the meetings of the inter-agency machinery that would eventually emerge. OAU should also be invited, when appropriate, to address such high-level inter-agency machinery as the United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination, as and when issues related to the United Nations New Agenda or more generally to cooperation between the United Nations and OAU are to be discussed. It would also, through its member States, voice its concerns at the United Nations Committee for Programme and Coordination when the United Nations New Agenda-related subjects are considered.

32. It was agreed that OAU should continue contacts with the various United Nations agencies with a view to reviewing specific sectoral activities. In this context, it was recommended that sectoral meetings, or meetings on cross-sectoral issues, should be organized as and when required. While food and agriculture, as well as environment in the light of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held at

Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, were indicated as some of such sectoral issues, it was agreed that consultations should take place between OAU and the United Nations system of organizations to identify the need, the nature and the scope of such sectoral meetings which should not be exclusive of any sector. It was also recommended that OAU and the United Nations specialized agencies should endeavour to invite the OAU specialized agencies in the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda-related activities. In this regard, it was suggested that OAU specialized agencies should prepare and submit concrete project proposals to the United Nations system for joint activities.

33. While the matter was not directly related to cooperation between the United Nations and OAU, the meeting underscored the fact that the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s rested on a number of critical requirements to Africa's economic recovery and development, paramount among which were adequate resource flows to Africa, alleviation of the external debt burden and remunerative prices of primary commodities. It was noted that OAU could provide political support to the efforts of the United Nations system of organization in getting additional resources to be used in various sectoral activities aimed at African economic recovery and development. It was also noted that the net resource flows required to achieve a 6 per cent annual growth rate of the African economy could only be seen as complementary to Africa's own domestic savings. Consequently, greater effort should be made towards domestic resource mobilization.

34. Finally, OAU was requested to ensure that the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s was placed on the agenda of subsequent meetings between OAU and the United Nations system of organizations. It was agreed that this should be done while maintaining the format of previous meetings.

Notes

1/ General Assembly resolution 46/151, annex, sect. II.